



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday, 20 June 2023

Time: 6.00pm,

Location: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Contact: Ian Gourlay (01438) 242203

committees@stevenage.gov.uk

Members: Councillors: L Martin-Haugh (Chair), P Bibby CC (Vice-Chair), S Booth, R Broom, J Brown, Chowdhury, M Downing, B Facey, C McGrath, S Mead, M Notley, R Parker CC, Veres and A Wells

AGENDA

PART 1

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2. **MINUTES - 21 MARCH 2023**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 March 2023.

Pages 3 – 8

3. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

To note the Terms of Reference as agreed at Annual Council on 24 May 2023.

Pages 9 – 10

4. **PART I DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

To consider the following Part I Decisions of the Executive taken on 14 June 2023.

2. Minutes – 15 March 2023

3. Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees

4. Implementation of Building Safety Act 2022

5. DLUHC Future Councils Grant Award

6. Urgent Part I Business

Notice of Decisions to follow.

5. **URGENT PART I DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE**

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To consider any urgent Part I Decisions authorised by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

To consider the Committee's Work Programme for 2023/24.

Pages 11 – 16

7. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

To consider any Part I business accepted by the Chair as urgent

8. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider the following motions:

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

9. PART II MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 21 MARCH 2023

To approve as a correct record the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 March 2023

Pages 17 – 20

10. PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

To consider the following Part II Decisions of the Executive taken on 14 June 2023.

9. Appointment of Developer at Brent Court Garages and Shephall View Development Sites.

Notice of Decisions to follow

11. URGENT PART II DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To consider any urgent Part II Decisions authorised by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

12. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent

Agenda Published **12 June 2023**

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STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 21 March 2023

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors: Lin Martin-Haugh (Chair), Philip Bibby CC (Vice-Chair), Rob Broom, Jim Brown, Michael Downing, Bret Facey, Wendy Kerby, Conor McGrath, Andy McGuinness, Sarah Mead, Robin Parker CC, Claire Parris and Anne Wells.

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 7.47pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Loraine Rossati.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES - 14 FEBRUARY 2023

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 14 February 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 PART I DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

2. Minutes – 8 February 2023

Noted.

3. Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees

Noted.

4. Corporate Performance Quarter 3 2022/23

The Strategic Director (RP) advised that the Executive had received a presentation from the Chief Executive regarding Quarter 3 performance against the Future Town Future Council indicators, together with other corporate indicators, and proposed improvement activities for the red indicators. All four recommendations in the report were approved by the Executive.

5. Third Quarter Revenue Monitoring Report 2022/23 – General Fund and Housing Revenue Account

The Assistant Director (Finance) advised that the Executive had approved a Quarter 3 net decrease in General Fund expenditure of £205,150 and a net increase in Housing Revenue Account expenditure of £157,750. All six recommendations in the report were approved by the Executive.

6. Third Quarter Capital Monitoring Report 2022/23 – General Fund and Housing Revenue Account

The Assistant Director (Finance) advised that the Executive had approved all five recommendations in the report, which primarily concerned the reprofiling of Capital projects from the 2022/23 budget to 2023/24 and/or future years.

7. Urgent Part I Business – Zero Emission Bus Scheme

The Strategic Director (TP) stated that the Executive had received a verbal report from the Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise & Transport conveying the disappointing news that Arriva had opted not to progress with the Zero Emission bus scheme in Stevenage. The Portfolio Holder had informed the Executive that the Council had been led to believe that lower than expected passenger numbers had made it difficult for Arriva to justify their business case of match funding the Government's investment for the scheme. He had commented that SBC officers were engaging with HCC, who had led this bid, to help to consider if there were any solutions or routes forward.

In response to a series of Members questions, it was confirmed:

- HCC was in discussions with a bus operator in another part of the county to see if a zero emission scheme could work for that provider in that location; and
- There was no indication from the Department of Transport as to when and if any other rounds of support funding would be provided in the future for zero emission bus schemes.

A Member stated that the Committee's anger, as well as disappointment, at Arriva's decision to not participate in the scheme should be conveyed to the Executive. The Member hoped that a report would be presented at a later date on the progress made with regard to potential solutions for the future.

The Chair of the Environment & Economy Select Committee commented that he would give consideration to the inclusion of an item on bus services in Stevenage, including the zero emission scheme, on the agenda for a future meeting of that Committee.

4 URGENT PART I DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

None.

5 WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

The Scrutiny Officer submitted a report requesting the Committee to agree its Work Programme for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

The seven Member suggestions for inclusion in the Committee's Work Programme for 2023/24 were referred to as follows:

- ICT performance and future direction;
- Census data assessment;
- Re-assessment of Scrutiny of Scrutiny review carried out in 2021;
- Joint Service provision/Shared Services;
- Review of SBC's use of consultants;
- Possible changes to SBC services that would benefit the customer experience; and
- The establishment of an autonomous cross-party team (with a membership without senior Members or officers), including employees from each department, to identify areas requiring change or improvement.

The Committee debated these suggestions and, whilst appreciating that there would be capacity issues associated with delivering them all in 2023/24, agreed that Members be invited to rank them. In addition, it was agreed that officers be requested to give consideration to, and report back to the Committee on, the method of delivery of the seven suggestions, which for some could be via informal methods of delivery other than review by formal meetings of the Committee.

In relation to the Scrutiny of Scrutiny review, the Scrutiny Officer agreed to re-circulate the 2021 review report to Committee Members, together with the then Leader of the Council's responses to the recommendations contained in that report.

The Committee discussed scrutiny of the budget, and expressed disappointment that the Leader's Financial Security Group (LSFG) had not met at all during 2022/23 to consider the 2023/24 Revenue Budget and had only met on one occasion to consider the 2023/24 Capital Budget. The Committee was advised that this had been due to the complex and challenging nature surrounding the preparation of the 2023/24 budget. The Strategic Director (TP) and Assistant Director (Finance) agreed to seek confirmation from the Strategic Director (CF) regarding the plans for LSFG meetings later in the year to scrutinise the 2024/25 budget proposals, and to advise Members of the Committee accordingly.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That Scrutiny Members' feedback on ideas from improving Scrutiny (as set out in Section 4 of the report, be noted.

2. That Committee Members be invited to rank the seven suggestions for inclusion in the Committee's Work Programme for 2023/24.
3. That officers be requested to give consideration to, and report back to the Committee on, the method of delivery of the seven suggestions, which for some could be via informal methods of delivery other than review by formal meetings of the Committee.
4. That the Portfolio Holder Advisory Group meetings to carry out policy development work identified so far for the Committee, as set out in Section 7 of the report, be noted.

6 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None.

7 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 to 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by SI 2006 No. 88.
2. That having considered the reasons for the following item being in Part II, it be determined that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

8 PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

9. Youth Skills Investment in Stevenage

The Committee raised a number of comments regarding this item.

10. Affordable Older Persons Housing Stock – New Supply and Stock Management

The Housing Development Delivery Manager answered a Member's question regarding this item.

11. Land Acquisition and Scheme Contract Approval

The Committee noted this item.

12. Site Disposal Report

The Assistant Director (Finance) and Commercial Asset Manager answered a number of Members' questions regarding this item.

13. Proposed Development – The Forum

The Assistant Director (Regeneration) answered a number of Members' questions regarding this item.

9 URGENT PART II DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

None.

10 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Membership - 14 (Not to be Members of the Executive but to include the Chairs of the 2 Select Committees)
2. Quorum - 4
3. Terms of Reference
 - 3.1. To consider the activities of the Executive and to have responsibility to reconsider any executive decision that has been subject to call-in, in accordance with the provisions of the Scrutiny provisions as set out in the Council's Constitution.
 - 3.2. Responsibility for the scrutiny of all initial proposals for the development of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework provisions in the Council's Constitution.
 - 3.3. To determine a Scrutiny work programme to examine the spending, policies and administration of the Council's services within the direct purview for services of a Corporate and/or Council wide nature and relationships with partners and external agencies involved with these areas, together with a timetable and method of study for each topic.
 - 3.4. To determine formal recommendations in relation to scrutiny studies undertaken for reporting to the Council, Executive, other Committees, Officers and / or partner agencies as appropriate.
 - 3.5. To review the Forward Plan of Key Decisions in relation to services within the direct purview for services of a corporate and/or Council wide nature, considering if it wishes to make any input to policy issues contained in the Plan and if so, how. In undertaking this work the Committee may call upon the relevant Executive Member and/or Assistant Director to provide a briefing or take part in discussion.
 - 3.6. That in respect of policy development of matters that fall within the remit of this Committee, to meet with the relevant Portfolio Holder to comment on individual draft policies that are scheduled to be considered to the Executive.
 - 3.7. To work with other Select Committees, as appropriate when considering cross-cutting scrutiny studies and policy development when both Committees have so agreed.
 - 3.8. To consider matters referred to the Committee under the procedure for the Councillor Call for Action in relation to matters

within the direct purview for services of a Corporate and/or Council wide nature.

- 3.9 In accordance with the Petitions Scheme, consider Petitions, Petition Reviews and interview Senior Council Officers (as requested by a Petition) in relation to matters within the direct purview for services of a Corporate and/or Council wide nature.
- 3.10 In conjunction with the Select Committees, responsibility for the on-going development of the Scrutiny function of the Council.
- 3.11 To report to the Executive, other committees or Council, as appropriate.

Lead AD	SD Tom Pike
Deputy	SD Richard Protheroe
Chair	Cllr Lin Martin-Haugh
Vice-Chair	Cllr Phil Bibby

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023-24
(Including review items, statutory Budget and Policy Framework items, and policy development items)**

Scrutiny Review items 2019/20: (Priority of potential scrutiny review items High/Medium/Low and suitability in 2019/20)	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Other details: i.e. (i) Number of meetings item can be covered in? (ii) Whether scoping required? (iii) Expectation/ style of meeting & (iv) other details	Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy	Other Details	Complete ✓ x
(High Priority) One off performance review of ICT	AD Technology Matt Canterford, SD Resources, Clare Fletcher & Exec Portfolio Holder Resources.	To be scheduled. Likely to be in early 2024 to allow new AD Technology time to implement plans	(i) Initially One meeting (ii) Scope required (iii) Presentation from officers leading to a Q&A with Scrutiny Members.		The session would consider past performance (with context around past major loss of service ICT incidents provided) and plans for future systems and delivery. Due to the security risk of the Cyber Security measures affecting a number of key ICT systems, it will be	

Scrutiny Review items 2019/20: (Priority of potential scrutiny review items High/Medium/Low and suitability in 2019/20)	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Other details: i.e. (i) Number of meetings item can be covered in? (ii) Whether scoping required? (iii) Expectation/ style of meeting & (iv) other details	Comment by lead Assistant Director/Deputy	Other Details	Complete ✓ ✗
					necessary for this session to be conducted in a Part II confidential meeting.	
2021 Census Data for Stevenage		To be advised/ Scheduled.	(i) One or two meetings (ii) Scope required Presentation from officers leading to a Q&A with Scrutiny Members.			

Monitoring of Previous Recommendations/Actions								
Scrutiny items:	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Number of meetings item can be covered in?	Expectation/ Style of meeting	Scoping details (whether full scope or simple scope required)	Other details	Comment by lead Assistant Director/ Deputy	Complete ✓ ✘
Consider the Committee's Action Tracker		13 July 2023	One meeting	Members comment on the document – which may lead to further monitoring	No scope required			

Any monitoring of previous reviews will be agreed when the Committee considers the action tracker at its meeting on 13 July 2023.

Statutory Budget & Policy Framework Items:	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Number of meetings item can be covered in?	Expectation/Style of meeting	Scoping details (whether full scope or simple scope required)	Other details
(High Priority) The 2024/2025 HRA and Rent Setting	Clare Fletcher SD Sec 151 Officer/Executive	December 2023	Yes, covered in one meeting	Presentation by AD with supporting papers	No scoping required	

Statutory Budget & Policy Framework Items:	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Number of meetings item can be covered in?	Expectation/Style of meeting	Scoping details (whether full scope or simple scope required)	Other details
	Portfolio Holder for Resources					
(High Priority) Making Your Money Count Budget Options 2022/23 U	Clare Fletcher SD Sec 151 Officer/Executive Portfolio Holder for Resources	November 2023	Yes, covered in one meeting	Presentation by SD & AD with supporting papers	No scoping required	
(High Priority) Council Tax Support Scheme (refresh of scheme reviewed annually by Exec) S E	Clare Fletcher SD Sec 151 Officer & Su Tarran HoS Executive Portfolio Holder for Resources	January 2025	Yes, covered in one meeting	Presentation by SD & AD with supporting papers	No scoping required	
(High Priority) General Fund Budget and Council Tax Setting	Clare Fletcher SD Sec 151 Officer/Executive Portfolio Holder for Resources	January 2025	Yes, covered in one meeting	Presentation by SD & AD with supporting papers	No scoping required	

Portfolio Holder Advisory Group - Policy Development Items:	Strategic Director, Assistant Director, Lead Officer(s) & Portfolio Holder	Provisional meeting date(s) identified	Number of meetings item covered in?	Expectation/ Style of meeting	Scope details	Other details	Complete ✓ ✗
<u>Council Tax Support Scheme and Universal Credit</u> Page 17	Clare Fletcher SD Sec 151 Officer/Su Tarran HoS/ Executive Portfolio Holder for Resources	20 June 2023	One	Lead by the SD/AD and Chaired by the Chair of O&S Opportunity for Scrutiny Members to meet with officers and the Executive Portfolio Holder to carry out some pre-scrutiny of the any proposed changes or amendments to the Council Tax Support Scheme and to discuss the content and shape of a Policy document before it is completely finalised in order to help shape the final outcome.			

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